

106TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 486

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding César E. Chavez and farm worker housing programs.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 2, 2000

Mr. BACA submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding César E. Chavez and farm worker housing programs.

Whereas César E. Chávez was born March 31, 1927, on a small farm near Yuma, Arizona, and died on April 23, 1993;

Whereas numerous holidays, schools, parks, libraries, and other structures and events have been named after César E. Chavez, internationally and in Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Mexico, New York, Oklahoma, and Texas, with many more planned;

Whereas César E. Chávez was a recipient of the Martin Luther King Jr. Peace Prize during his lifetime and was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Clinton on August 8, 1994;

Whereas, the grandson of a Mexican immigrant and settler, he grew up working with migrant farm workers, himself picking grapes, melons, beans, and other staple crops at low wages and for long hours, during which time he developed a strong work ethic and respect for the farm workers his father called “the children of God”;

Whereas at the age of 18, César E. Chávez entered the United States Navy and served his country with distinction for 2 years;

Whereas, as early as 1949, César E. Chávez committed himself to organizing farm workers to campaign for safe and fair working conditions, reasonable wages, decent housing, and the outlawing of child labor;

Whereas in 1962, César E. Chávez founded the National Farm Workers Association, predecessor of the United Farm Workers of America, which brought hope to farm workers that they might one day realize the basic protections and workers’ rights to which all Americans aspire;

Whereas, through his commitment to nonviolence, César E. Chavez brought dignity and respect to the farm workers who organized themselves, and became an inspiration and a resource to other Americans and people engaged in human rights struggles throughout the world;

Whereas César E. Chávez was an advocate for nonviolence at a time when violence penetrated every level of our society;

Whereas César E. Chávez and his family also dedicated themselves to the education of farm workers’ children through migrant schools, many of whom graduated and worked as teachers, doctors, nurses, and in other professional occupations;

Whereas the legacy of César E. Chavez includes healthy working conditions that yield uncontaminated food for America's tables;

Whereas César E. Chavez's influence extends far beyond agriculture and provides inspiration for those working to better human rights through his example of organizing voter registration drives in urban and farm areas, initiating complaints against mistreatment by police and welfare officials, and empowering everyday workers to seek advancement in education and politics;

Whereas César E. Chavez lived alongside his campesino brothers and sisters in humble surroundings and upon his passing was laid to rest where he lived and worked for 23 years on the grounds of the headquarters of the United Farm Workers of America, known as Nuestra Señora de La Paz (Our Lady of Peace), located in the Tehachapi Mountains at Keene, California; and

Whereas the Nation should not cease its efforts to improve the conditions of farm workers, remembering the rallying cry of César E. Chavez, "Si se puede!" (There is Hope!): Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the House of Rep-

2 resentatives that—

3 (1) schools across the Nation should teach
4 about César E. Chavez and lead community service
5 projects in his memory; and

6 (2) farm worker housing programs should be
7 supported at the Federal, State, and local levels.

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